

# Child Safe Standards

## What We Heard Report

March 2020



## Child Safe Standards

**The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, reported in 2017, set out a plan to prevent abuse and harm to children and young people in organisations.**

We will follow Royal Commission recommendations by introducing Child Safe Standards.

The ACT Human Rights Commission will oversee the new standards.

## The Conversation

**We asked you to give feedback on the design of the Child Safe Standards scheme.**

We held a conversation with stakeholders from November 2019 to February 2020 through an online survey and direct conversations that asked questions about:

- Which organisations we should include in the scheme
- How the ACT Human Rights Commission can support these organisations
- How we can make sure organisations follow the new standards
- What we can do to enforce the new standards
- How we can make sure organisations have enough time to prepare for the new scheme

People could take part in the consultation in a range of ways including face to face meetings, speaking by phone, writing a submission, or an online survey.

## Who Engaged

**We contacted hundreds of organisations working with children and young people.**

We sent direct emails and e-newsletters to peak bodies and organisations in the following sectors:

- arts and culture
- commercial services for children
- community sector
- child protection system
- disability services
- early childhood education and care
- health services
- out of school hours care
- schools (public, Catholic, Independent)
- religious organisations
- sports and recreation
- youth justice system
- youth sector

The feedback you gave helped us understand how the standards will impact organisations.



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### Key insights from the community

#### Protecting and empowering children and young people is important

1. People either supported Child Safe Standards or recognised that we need the standards.
2. Many people see Child Safe Standards as an opportunity to improve the way they do things.

#### Organisations need clear guidance about what they need to do

3. There are different levels of awareness of Child Safe Standards.
4. Some people knew a lot about Child Safe Standards and already follow them.
5. Many people asked for clear guidance so they can understand what they need to do.

#### Organisations need support to follow Child Safe Standards

5. A few organisations already have Child Safe Standards and feel confident that the new scheme will not change things.
6. Time and resources to put the new standards in place is a concern for many organisations. They would like help and support to make changes.

#### Regulatory bodies must work together

7. Child safety regulators must coordinate their activities. Child Safe Standards will exist alongside:
  - Working with Vulnerable People checks
  - Reportable Conduct
  - Criminal offences
8. The Human Rights Commission should work with regulators. Some organisations are already regulated or accredited, so we should avoid doubling up.

## What's Next?

### We will use your feedback to design the ACT Child Safe Standards scheme.

Thank you for giving your feedback. Your experiences are an important contribution to Child Safe Standards in the ACT.

We will make decisions on the Child Safe Standards scheme during 2020, with an expectation that legislation will be introduced in the Legislative Assembly later in the year.

You can stay up to date at: [act.gov.au/childabuseroyalcommission](https://act.gov.au/childabuseroyalcommission)

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### Key Timings

**Dec 2017** – Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse final report

**Feb 2019** – National Principles for Child Safe Organisations published

**Nov 2019 to Feb 2020** – Public consultation on Child Safe Standards in the ACT

**Mar 2020** – Considering community feedback and drafting legislation

**Mid 2020** – Legislation expected to be introduced and debated in the Legislative Assembly

### THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK

**800+**

people reached on the  
YourSay Conversations  
page

**50+**

peak bodies and  
organisations gave face-  
to-face feedback

**41**

people responded to the  
online survey

**15**

organisations made  
written submissions